



# MCDHH NEWS

Summer 2005

## HOSPITAL ACCESS CONSUMER REPORT

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Earlier this year MCDHH completed a survey of communications accessibility in Missouri hospitals. Survey questionnaires were sent out to all 145 Missouri hospitals, and 95 completed questionnaires were eventually returned giving a 66 percent (66%) response rate. MCDHH extends our most sincere thanks to all of the hospitals that participated in this survey.

In general, the survey results present a useful overview of how well hospitals in Missouri are doing when it comes to providing communications accessibility for deaf and hard of hearing people. In some areas, hospitals are doing fairly well at providing access. For example, in 82% of Missouri hospitals television sets in the rooms of patients can display closed captions. In other areas, however, many Missouri hospitals are clearly not meeting their legal responsibilities for providing access. For example, 30% of Missouri hospitals cannot provide TTY's to deaf patients to use in their rooms for making outgoing calls.

The results of this survey are now available in the form of a "Consumer Report" entitled "Communications Accessibility in Missouri Hospitals." That report can be found on the MCDHH website, and is available in hardcopy to anyone who contacts the MCDHH office and requests a copy. MCDHH sincerely hopes that this "Consumer Report" will serve as a stimulus for deaf and hard of hearing people throughout the state of Missouri to visit their local hospital and ask about communications accessibility for people with hearing loss at that facility. And, if needed, request that your hospital review its policies, practices, and capabilities related to providing communications access to persons with hearing loss. Don't wait until you have to visit the emergency room to find out that the staff at your local hospital does not know how to obtain an interpreter or where to get an assistive listening device. Just like preventive medicine, having discussions with the staff at your local hospital concerning communications accessibility for people with hearing loss before such accessibility is actually needed can save you a lot of pain and frustration!



**St. John's Hospital in Springfield**

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## AN ASL BILL BECOMES LAW -- FINALLY!

On June 24th, Governor Blunt signed HB 530 into law at a public signing ceremony in his office in the Capitol Building in Jefferson City, Missouri. The law becomes effective on August 28, 2005, and that date will mark the end of a very long effort to enact an ASL statute in Missouri. The language of the law specifically will require that American Sign Language be counted toward satisfaction of any foreign language or language arts requirements in any public school or public institution of higher education in Missouri, and it will require that ASL be accepted for meeting the "foreign language" entrance requirements of any public institution of higher education in Missouri. But people still ask, "What does it really mean?"

When HB 530 becomes law, it will mean that deaf students who have ASL as their native language will no longer have to struggle with the near impossible task of trying to learn an oral language like French or German in order to get admitted to a public college or university in Missouri. And it will mean that many deaf ASL speakers will no longer necessarily have to go out of state to get admitted to a college. Rather, they can go to college closer to home and pay cheaper in-state tuition rates.

CODAs (Child of Deaf Adult) will no longer be required to learn three languages in order to be admitted to public universities in Missouri. Currently they learn ASL as their first language; then they learn English as their second language; and then they have to learn some other "foreign language" in order to be admitted to most colleges in Missouri. Soon they will be able to use their native language (ASL) to satisfy any foreign language entrance requirement at any public university in Missouri.

Hearing students at community colleges in Missouri will now have an incentive to take ASL classes as they will now be able to use ASL to meet language requirements when transferring to 4-year public universities. Parents of deaf students will now have an incentive for asking their local school board to add ASL classes to their high school curricula as their children will now be able to proficiency those classes and use the credits to satisfy college entrance requirements. And high schools will now have an incentive to add ASL classes to their curricula, as their students will now be able to use that language to satisfy college entrance requirements.

Hearing members of the general public will benefit from this bill as hopefully more and more people learn to communicate with ASL speakers. And Missouri colleges and universities will potentially benefit from increased enrollments and greater linguistic and cultural diversity on their campuses. All in all, it's a "win-win" situation for everyone concerned.



**Governor Matt Blunt Signing HB 530**

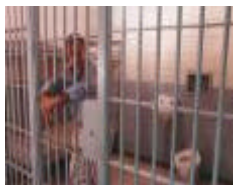
MCDHH wishes to thank everyone who helped in the long struggle to get an ASL bill passed in Missouri. Your efforts are greatly appreciated. And we would be remiss if we did not extend public "Thanks" to Representatives Danie Moore of Fulton and Sam Page of Creve Coeur, as well as Senator John Loudon of Ballwin, for their help in guiding HB 530 through the legislature this year. Because of them, ASL now rightfully takes its place alongside the other languages of the world in the Missouri public educational system.

## 2006 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

After receiving feedback from many deaf and hard of hearing Missourians, MCDHH has chosen its top two consumer-oriented legislative priorities for the 2006 legislative session. During the coming year we will be working to get laws passed that would (1) mandate real-time captioning of all local news programs broadcast by Missouri television stations, and (2) mandate that all physical forms of electronic visual educational media used in Missouri classrooms that include spoken information be either open or closed captioned. This would include visual media such as CD ROMs, DVDs, VHS videos, and film. A similar bill was introduced in 2005, and received much support although it died in the House committee to which it was referred. If you want to keep informed concerning the progress of these legislative initiatives, and perhaps provide support at critical points in the process, you need only send an e-mail to [MCDHH@mcdhh.mo.gov](mailto:MCDHH@mcdhh.mo.gov) and ask that you be added to our listserv (MCDHH-L).

### COMMUNICATIONS ACCESSIBILITY SURVEY OF MISSOURI JAILS

The Communications Accessibility Survey of Missouri Jails is now complete. MCDHH mailed out a copy of the accessibility questionnaire to all 113 jails in the state of Missouri and received 81 back for an excellent return rate of seventy-two percent (72%). Regrettably, the survey data paints a pretty bleak picture and generally shows quite limited communications accessibility in jails across our state. MCDHH will be releasing a complete Consumer Report concerning communications access in Missouri jails in the very near future, and copies can be requested simply by contacting the MCDHH office.



**Accessible?**

### VIDEOPHONE ACCESS AT MCDHH

MCDHH is pleased to announce that it is making the videophone at its office available for deaf and hard of hearing people to use. If you have never made a call using a videophone, MCDHH staff can quickly show you how to use it. Videophone usage must be scheduled with the MCDHH staff at least one day prior to its desired use, and it can only be scheduled for a maximum of one hour's use on a given day.

### JOIN THE FUN AT SILVER DOLLAR CITY

MCDHH will host its annual Deaf and Hard of Hearing Awareness event at Silver Dollar City (SDC) on September 17th. Everyone is invited to join us! Several information booths will be there; interpreters will be available to enhance your enjoyment of the shows, and the weather promises to cooperate. As always, SDC will be beautifully decorated for the Fall season, and the Festival of American Music and Crafts will provide many opportunities to enjoy watching and listening to artisans keeping the past alive. For tickets call 1-800-417-7770, and just mention Deaf Awareness Weekend offer # 8316 to get the special two-day ticket price of \$31.94 for an adult (age 12+) or \$21.30 for a child (4-11).



**Entrance to Silver Dollar City**



## AMY FOWLER MOVES ON

In life, all good things come to an end. And a very good thing recently came to an end at the MCDHH office. Amy Fowler resigned from her position as Coordinator of the Missouri Interpreters Certification System effective August 5th. Amy served as the MICS Coordinator for over four years, and she brought to that position a degree of professionalism, stability and integrity that it had never before seen. During Amy's tenure, support for the MICS has solidified among Missouri interpreters; MCDHH has become a remote testing site for the Educational Interpreters Performance Assessment (EIPA); MCDHH has become an RID sponsor; the Missouri Interpreters Conference has become one of the largest interpreter training experiences hosted by any state; and MICS testing and evaluation procedures have been improved. Without a doubt, Amy will surely be missed by all of us. We thank her for giving us the opportunity to know and work with her, and we wish her and her husband Mark the best of everything in their future.



**Amy Fowler—Past MICS Coordinator**

## LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

MCDHH is seeking nominations for possible recipients of 2005 Lifetime Achievement Awards. Lifetime Achievement Awards were first presented by MCDHH in 2001, and are presented to people who have given many years of exemplary service to improve the lives of deaf and hard of hearing Missourians. Anyone can be nominated for a Lifetime Achievement Award regardless of where they now live. For example, a person may have lived most of their life in Missouri and made many significant contributions to the lives of Missourians with hearing loss while living here. Then that person retired and moved to Florida. That person is still eligible to be nominated for a Lifetime Achievement Award. If you know of anyone whom you think is worthy of receiving a Lifetime Achievement Award, please nominate that person by sending their name and a brief statement of why you think they deserve such an award to [MCDHH@mcdhh.mo.gov](mailto:MCDHH@mcdhh.mo.gov). The deadline for this year's nominations is September 15th.

## MCDHH Executive Director Receives the Truman L. Ingle Memorial Award

Dr. Roy Miller, Executive Director of MCDHH, was completely surprised, truly humbled, very honored, and deeply appreciative to receive the Truman L. Ingle Memorial Award from the Missouri School for the Deaf (MSD) at its annual "beginning of the year" staff meeting on August 16th. The inscription on the award reads "Presented to Dr. Roy Miller in recognition of outstanding leadership and dedicated service to the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing in the State of Missouri." The award was presented by Barbara Garrison, Superintendent of MSD, who "tricked" Dr. Miller into attending the meeting under the pretense of having him give a talk about the passage of this year's American Sign Language bill.

## DEAF-BLIND INTERPRETING TRAINING

On July 23rd, Kandice Allee of the MCDHH staff attended a workshop sponsored by the RSA 7 Interpreter Training Project at Johnson County Community College and the Helen Keller National Center in Overland Park, Kansas, entitled "Deaf-Blind Interpreting". The training covered many different areas, such as, deaf-blind culture, interpreters versus support service providers, relaying visual and environmental information, communication techniques, and how to guide with confidence. Kim Davis will also be attending a similar training in St. Louis on September 10th sponsored by Paraquad Independent Living Center and the Helen Keller National Center. These trainings will ensure that the MCDHH staff can successfully interact with any deaf-blind persons who might visit our office.

## "ON THE ROAD" WITH MCDHH

The spring of the year is always the busiest season for hosting MCDHH exhibits at various venues, and this year was no exception. We began the exhibiting season by setting up our information booth at the "Pathways to Student Success" conference, which was held at Tan-Tar-A in early March. In mid-March we could be found at the annual conference of the Kansas Association of Interpreters. In early April we visited the annual conference of the Missouri Association for Speech-Language-Hearing. In June we had a booth at our 11th annual Deaf and Hard of Hearing Awareness Day at Six Flags St. Louis. And in July we were pleased to help the Missouri Association of the Deaf celebrate a century of service to deaf Missourians by exhibiting at their 39th Biennial Conference. We exhibit at various venues every year in pursuit of our legislative mandate to "promote deaf awareness to the general public," and we would always welcome suggestions of new places to add to our exhibiting schedule. If you have in mind some place that you think we should visit, please let us know.



**MCDHH Information Booth**

## 2005 EMPOWERMENT SYMPOSIUM

Mark your calendar and reserve Saturday October 29th for attending the 2005 Empowerment Symposium and the special evening performance by deaf entertainer Peter Cook. As always, this year's Empowerment Symposium will be held in conjunction with the annual Missouri Interpreters Conference. However, this year we will be in a new location, namely the Holiday Inn Select Executive Center in Columbia, Missouri. This year's Empowerment Symposium is presently being developed, but plans are for it to focus on two very important topics. The morning session will be devoted to a panel discussion of "ASL and Missouri's Future," and the afternoon sessions will focus on "Money Matters."

## 2005 INTERPRETERS CONFERENCE

The 12th annual Missouri Interpreters Conference will be held on October 28-30, 2005 at the Holiday Inn Select Executive Center in Columbia, Missouri. The new location will reduce driving time for most of our attendees, put everything on one floor (no more steps!), and provide better access to our major airports, easier parking, and a greater selection of restaurants to satisfy the tastes and pocket books of everyone. The conference theme is "Changes in Latitude, Changes in Attitude".



**Dr. Carol Patrie**

The Keynote Speaker will be Dr. Carol Patrie. Dr. Patrie is a national and international consultant on issues related to interpretation and teaching interpretation. She is Director of Curriculum and Instruction for The Effective Interpreting Professional Education Series, Language Matters, Inc. She is a past president of the Conference of Interpreter Trainers and is a recipient of the Mary Stottler Award. In 1998 she was awarded the Outstanding Graduate Faculty award at Gallaudet University where she was professor and director of the MA in Interpretation. She was a visiting faculty member at the Monterey Institute of International Studies. Patrie is the author of *The Effective Interpreting Series* and *Interpreting in Medical, Legal, and Insurance Settings*, all published by DawnSignPress. Her most recent release, the fourth in the series is *Consecutive Interpreting from English*. *Simultaneous Interpreting from English* will be released in 2005.

Relay Missouri has agreed to sponsor a Saturday workshop and a Saturday evening performance by Peter Cook. Peter is an internationally reputed Deaf performing artist whose works incorporate American Sign Language, pantomime, storytelling, acting, and movement. He has traveled extensively around the country and abroad since 1986 with the Flying Words Project to promote ASL Literature. Peter has appeared in Live from Off Center's "Words on Mouth" (PBS) and "United States of Poetry" (PBS). He has taught at Columbia College where he received the 1997 Excellence in Teaching award. In 1998, Peter set up a video production company called PC Production and is now based in Chicago. Peter was featured at the National Storytelling festival in Jonesboro, TN., The Winter tales in Oklahoma City, Illinois Storytelling Festival, Hoosier Storytelling Festival, the Multi-Cultural Festival in Eugene, Oregon, the Tales of Graz in Graz, Austria, Deaf Way II, and the Millennium Stage at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. Peter has worked with Deaf storytellers/poets in Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Japan. Peter was invited to the White House to join the National Book Festival in 2003.

In addition to our featured presenters, as always there will be many workshops to chose from, exhibits to browse, silent auction items to bid on, a great luncheon, Saturday evening entertainment by Peter Cook, a Saturday night dance for those who want to "get loose," and a low-key chat/game room for those who want to simply "let the dust settle." Plan to join us! It should be another great conference!

## NEW MCDHH WEBSITE ADDRESS

On July 1st, the address of the MCDHH website was changed to [www.mcdhh.mo.gov](http://www.mcdhh.mo.gov). The address was changed to make it very similar to our e-mail address ([MCDHH@mcdhh.mo.gov](mailto:MCDHH@mcdhh.mo.gov)), and thus quicker and easier to remember. The old website address will continue to work for a while, we don't know for how long. Hopefully this change of address will facilitate people visiting the MCDHH website more often.

## NEW BROCHURE AVAILABLE

The MCDHH office staff is always getting questions concerning where individuals or schools can get an interpreter. In order to be prepared to quickly respond to those questions, we have recently developed a new brochure entitled "Interpreter Referral Agencies Serving Missouri." That brochure lists all of the interpreter referral agencies currently serving the citizens of our state, including the agencies located just across the border in Illinois and Kansas. It will be updated periodically, and copies of this new brochure can be obtained by simply contacting the MCDHH office.

## GOOD-BYE TO BUSCH STADIUM

MCDHH is proud to join the St. Louis Round Table of Representatives (RTR) in co-sponsoring this year's Deaf Awareness Night at Old Busch Stadium. Mark your calendars and reserve Friday, September 9th for cheering for the Cardinals and saying good-bye to historic Busch Stadium, as it will be torn down at the end of this season. The game starts at 7:10 PM, and tickets are only \$18.00 apiece or two for \$34.00. So join us and help the Cardinals try to destroy the New York Mets! For more information, or to order tickets, contact Jerry Minchey by either sending e-mail to [j\\_minchey@hotmail.com](mailto:j_minchey@hotmail.com) or phoning 314-302-6214 (V).



## FCC ISSUES NEW RULES CONCERNING VRS

At its meeting on July 14th, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) adopted rules moving the Video Relay Service (VRS) closer to the goal of providing deaf and hard of hearing persons functionally equivalent access to the nation's telephone system.

VRS is a form of telecommunications relay service (TRS). TRS enables an individual with a hearing or speech disability to communicate by telephone or other device through the telephone system with a person without such a disability. VRS allows communications using sign language through a communications assistant (CA), who facilitates the call, via a video link, rather than through typed text. Through VRS, the conversation between the two end users, deaf and hearing, flows in near real time and in a faster and more natural manner than with a TTY or text-based TRS call. As a result, VRS calls reflect a degree of "functional equivalency" unimaginable in a solely text-based TRS world. The use of VRS reflects this reality. In April 2005 the monthly minutes of use were approximately 1.8 million, a ten-fold increase in the past two years, and more than the number of interstate traditional TRS minutes.

The new rules establish, for the first time, mandatory speed of answer requirements for VRS, require VRS to be offered 24 hours a day, seven days a week (24/7), and permit VRS providers to be compensated for providing VRS Mail. The FCC also concluded that Spanish translation Video Relay Service (VRS) - in which the communications assistant (CA) translates what is signed in American Sign Language (ASL) into spoken Spanish, and *vice versa* - is a form of telecommunications relay service (TRS) compensable from the Interstate TRS fund. For more detailed information regarding these rules, you can go to <http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/dro/headlines.html> and read everything that the FCC had to say.



## Commission Members

Paul Blicharz, Chair  
Deaf/Hard of Hearing Organization

Kathleen Alexander  
Interpreter

Thomas Bastean  
Dept. of Elem. & Sec. Ed/MSD

Michael Boyd  
Deaf/Hard of Hearing Member

Lisa Geier  
Professional—Audiology

Leslie Hall  
Business Community

Antonina Wilson  
Parent of a Deaf/Hard of Hearing Child

Vacant  
Deaf/Hard of Hearing Member

Vacant  
Local Public School Administrator

## **"MAGIC" AT SIX FLAGS**

MCDHH hosted its 12th annual Deaf and Hard of Hearing Awareness Day at Six Flags St. Louis on June 11th. And despite threatening weather (it only rained a little bit!), the day was a huge success. There were several information booths present, hundreds of tickets were sold, and the day was made special by two performances of Matthew "Magic" Morgan. The magic of Morgan was sponsored by MCDHH and Relay Missouri. All in all, it was another "fun in the sun" day and an opportunity for thousands of people in the general public to see interpreters at work, learn more about the special communication needs of deaf and hard of hearing people, and "rub elbows" with many Missourians with hearing loss. Our special thanks go out to Dan Betzler and the students in the Interpreter Training Program at FVCC for their volunteer help at our Six Flags event.



**Matthew "Magic" Morgan**



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